

**COMMUNICATION TO BE MADE TO THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE " ASSOCIATION
INTERNATIONALE D'OCÉANOGRAPHIE PHYSIQUE"
(Washington 1939)**

by

VICE-ADMIRAL J. D. NARES, PRESIDENT OF THE DIRECTING COMMITTEE.

on

**THE WORK CARRIED OUT BY THE
INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC BUREAU.**

At the last General Assembly held at Edinburgh in 1936, I had the honour of presenting an address on the subject of the constitution of, and work carried out by, the International Hydrographic Bureau. As many of those here to-day attended that Assembly, I do not propose repeating what I then said but will confine my remarks to the progress of the work carried out by us since that date.

a) In accordance with our Statutes, an International Hydrographic Conference was held at Monaco in April 1937 under the Presidency of the Hydrographer of the British Navy, Rear-Admiral EDGELL, and the Vice-Presidency of M. COT, the French Hydrographer. It was attended by some twenty delegates of the States Members and by representatives of the League of Nations, the International Commission of Air Navigation and the Ibero-American Oceanographic Council. The Conference lasted ten days and, as in previous Conferences, much valuable discussion took place on all sections of Hydrography. As I remarked in 1936, these conferences are held at intervals of not more than five years, and a Directing Committee consisting of three members of different nationalities is elected to carry on the work of the Bureau between these conferences. The Directing Committee elected at the last conference was : myself as President, Admiral CROSLY, U.S.N., and Ingénieur Hydrographe Général de VANSAY, of the Marine Française. Unfortunately Admiral CROSLY's tenure of office was short as, only five months after commencing his duties, he was taken seriously ill and died the following January. His death was a great loss, not only to our Bureau, but to Hydrography in general. A new Director, Rear Admiral LEAHY, late Hydrographer of the U.S. Navy, has since been elected to fill his place.

I will now briefly describe some of the more important items of work which have been carried out by our Bureau since the Edinburgh Conference of 1936 :

b) The work of preparation of the 3rd Edition of the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans has made steady progress. When I last addressed you, two sheets covering the Atlantic as far as 46° N. and South had been completed and published ; since then four more sheets have been published covering the northern part of the Atlantic, the Baltic, the north and west coasts of Norway and the White Sea, the Mediterranean and Red Seas, and Western Indian Ocean, and work on the sheet comprising the eastern part of the Indian Ocean and the China Seas is well in hand. A photograph showing the compilation of this sheet is available for examination.

I wish to again thank that scientific organisation who has made special grants for the purpose of expediting the issue of the 3rd Edition of this chart, namely the National Academy of Sciences, Washington.

Copies of the new sheets are available for consultation if required.

c) During the course of the General Assembly at Edinburgh in 1936, a Committee was appointed to study the question of nomenclature so far as the major divisions of the Oceans are concerned, with the object of putting definite proposals before this General Assembly. Dr. T. Wayland Vaughan, U.S. National Museum, Washington, was elected Chairman and the President of the International Hydrographic Bureau, Secretary, conditional on the International Hydrographic Conference 1937 deciding that the Bureau should undertake this work. This was unanimously approved during the course of the conference, since when I have acted in that capacity. A report of the Committee's activities will be presented by the Chairman in due course during the present Conference.

d) The Bureau has assisted the Committee of Mean Sea Level of the Association d'Océanographie Physique, by collecting data regarding the observed monthly and annual mean heights of sea-level from various authorities, for publication by the Association. The first booklet, for the year 1937 has already been issued.

e) The Bureau has continued to centralise Oceanic Soundings, especially those obtained by the echo method. These are plotted in the Bureau on a series of 1,001 sheets prepared for this purpose and are eventually used for the preparation of the 3rd Edition of the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans.

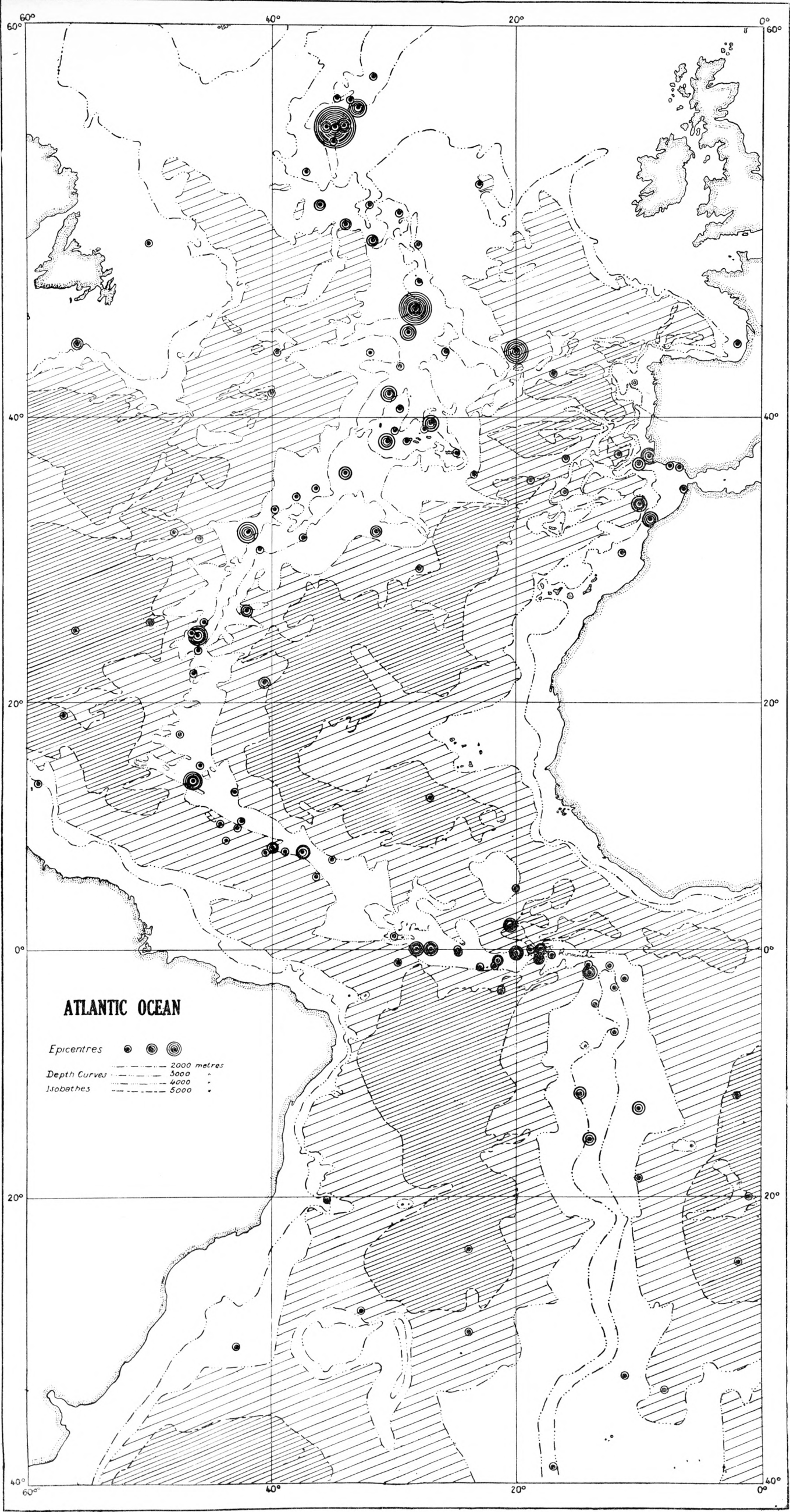
f) The International Hydrographic Conference 1937 decided that the International Hydrographic Bureau should take in hand, as part of its work, the compilation of a comprehensive and standard Dictionary of hydrographic terms. This work was at once taken in hand and has now reached proof stage. In finally deciding on the words to be included in the First Edition, the following principle was acted on, that a word which can be found in an ordinary dictionary should be generally omitted, some, however, being included mainly to provide their equivalents in other lan-

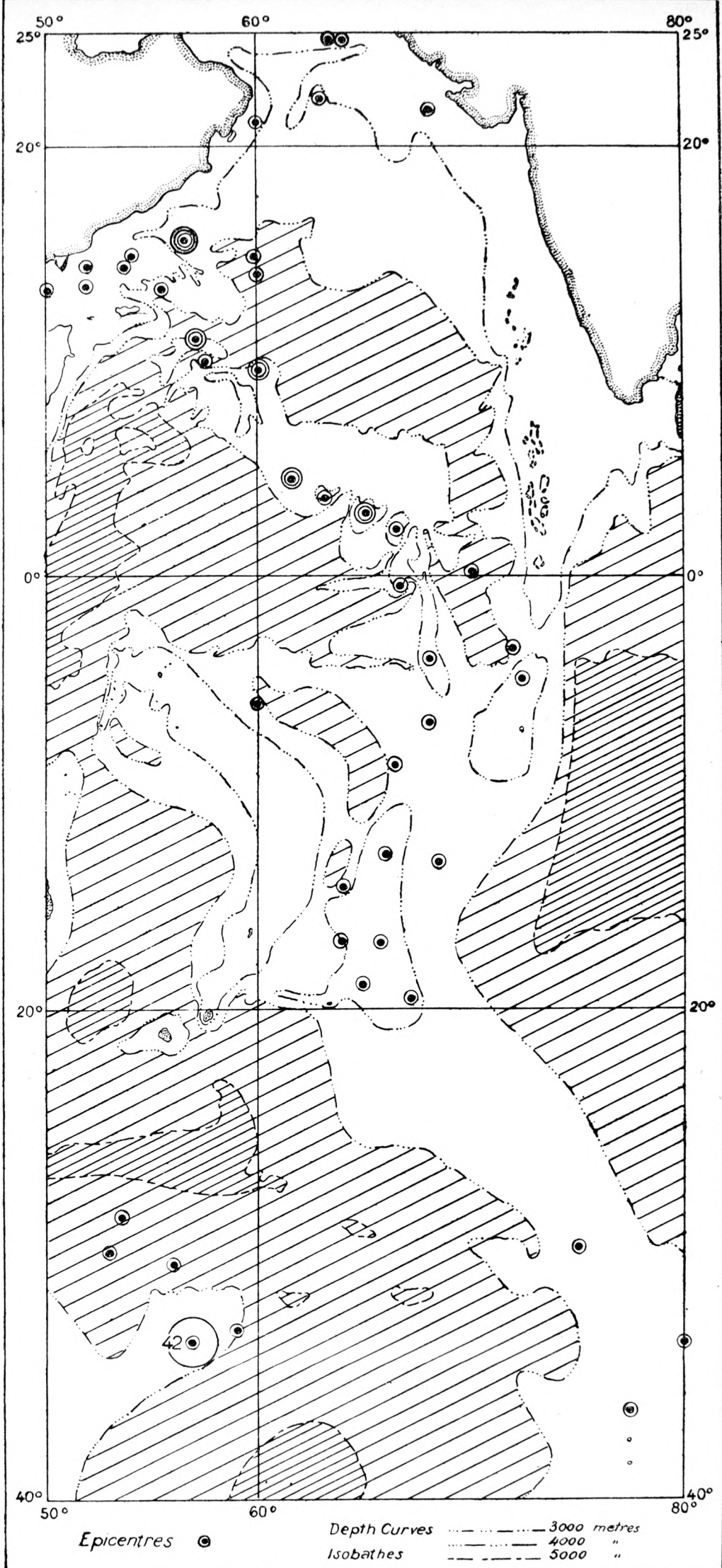
guages than French and English, and others, such as Light, Buoy, Boat, etc., for the purpose of calling attention to more detailed descriptions elsewhere in the Dictionary. It has thus been found possible to restrict the number of words to about 750, and their equivalents in eleven languages will be given, but, in order not to make the Dictionary too cumbersome, the definitions of the words will be given in French and English only, the official languages of the Bureau. Separate numbered indexes of all the words, arranged alphabetically in each of the eleven languages used, will facilitate cross reference.

Proof sheets of this Dictionary are available for examination.

g) In addition to the items of work I have specially mentioned, the Bureau frequently issues new editions of its various Special Publications on subjects affecting Hydrography, and has continued to issue the Hydrographic Review in May and November each year, and the International Hydrographic Bulletin every two months. A « Summary of Echo Sounding Apparatus » is in course of preparation and will shortly be issued as a Special Publication, and various subjects connected with Navigation, such as the Broadcasting of Urgent Notices to Mariners by W/T, the Characteristics of Lights, Geographical Positions, Symbols and Abbreviations used on Charts etc., are being dealt with by the Bureau with the object of obtaining international uniformity and thus simplifying matters for the navigators of the world.







INDIAN OCEAN